



rEAP the Benefits

State Employee Assistance Program 1-800-308-4934

Making “no” mean “no”

Attempts to stop offensive behavior can be undermined if you are more concerned about hurt feelings or what others might think of your being firm. It's crucial to avoid sending double messages. Apologizing, smiling, or not clearly saying “no” can undermine your goal of having offensive behavior stop. If something concerns or offends you enough to make an offending person stop (e.g., sexual harassment), try the head shake and both hands up to indicate “stop” and say, “Stop. Please.” Tell the person you do not feel comfortable with a specific behavior, certain words, or particular actions. Policies and rules that prohibit offensive or hostile behavior work, but they depend on clear and assertive communication, and employee willingness to act on them.

Is there a bully online?

Bullying incidents when viewed in isolation may appear trivial or may be unrecognized by others, yet they take a severe toll on productivity. Cyber-bullying is the use of e-mail, cell phones, and the Internet to perpetrate hostile behavior toward another person. Chronic criticism of a competent or popular, yet vulnerable, worker is a common form of bullying, and feelings of inadequacy by the perpetrator drive his or her behavior. As cyber-bullying, or online bullying, gains recognition, it is important to recognize victimization, talk about intervention, and avoid communicating with coworkers in ways that can be perceived as bullying.

Help for long-distance caregivers

The National Institute on Aging has issued a new resource to help long-distance caregivers. *So Far Away: Twenty Questions for Long-Distance Caregivers* is a booklet providing resources and ideas designed to make long-distance caregiving more convenient and fulfilling. For example, question number three covers “What can I really do from far away?” and provides a list of examples and ideas common to long-distance caregivers. *So Far Away* can be viewed online, or you may order a printed copy at www.nia.nih.gov.

Don't blow off the blues

If chronic stress causes you to hit the snooze button more often, has you feeling apathy for activities you used to enjoy, or has you calling in sick when you just feel down, don't take these feelings lightly if they persist. A research study last month from Harvard Medical School discovered that long-term exposure to the stress hormone cortisol contributes to the development of the anxiety associated with depression, even if there has never been a history of depression in the past. If you suspect you are going through a low point or are experiencing higher than usual anxiety, talk to your EAP or health care provider. Early diagnosis and treatment of minor depression can prevent it from erupting into something unmanageable.

American Psychological Association, Chronic Exposure to Stress, April 18, 2006, Press Release

EAP March awareness month

The State of Tennessee Employee Assistance Program recognized the participants of the 2006 March Awareness Month at its 14th Annual Awards Celebration on April 27, 2006 in Nashville. The theme for this year's events was "Spring Forward: Re-Energize Yourself!" The following agencies, departments and schools received top recognition.

Most Outstanding Creativity and Participation

- TN Department of Correction

Most Outstanding Participation

- TN Department of Environment & Conservation

Continuous Outstanding Participation

- TN Department of Health

Outstanding Participation

- Division of Mental Retardation Services

- East Tennessee State University

- Henry County School System

- TN Department of Agriculture

- TN Department of Children's S

- TN Wildlife Resources Agency

- TN Department of Transportation

- University of TN H

- ## Best Creativity Award

- TN Department of La

- ## Best Collaboration Award

- Finance & Administration and

- ## EAP Supervisory Training Award

- Board of Probation

- Lakeshore Mental Health Institute
 - Southwest Community College
 - TN Technology Center at Shelbyville
 - Warren County Government

The winner of the EAP "Re-Energize Yourself" contest is David Smith of the Department of Transportation. He received a weekend for two in a state park of choice. Certificates from Governor Bredesen were presented to all participating agencies, departments, schools and contest entrants. This year's promotion was a great success in receiving participation from all segments of state government.

Increasing your influence

Employees with influence get their ideas heard and, more importantly, have ideas accepted. You don't have to be charismatic in order to be influential. You simply need to apply principles of influence:

- Strive to be an authority by staying well-informed about your area of expertise.
 - Plan well-thought-out, logical arguments for your ideas that consider the needs and wants of others so you win their hearts and minds.
 - Develop a genuine interest in others' values, and grow a network of mutually productive relationships.
 - Practice looking, sounding, and acting confident so you are seen as an authority.
 - Observe influential people in your organization, noting their social interactions.
 - Be open to feedback, negotiate with others, and practice self-discipline in managing your emotions in response to disappointments.

Guarding your teen online

The Internet is a great learning tool for teenagers. However, it can also expose them to predators eager to exploit their vulnerability. As a parent, it is important to monitor your teen's online activities.



While some teens may feel this is an invasion of their privacy, parents need to be vigilant, just as they do when they allow their teens to stay out late at night with friends. You should know whom your teen talks to and when. Monitor all of your teen's online activity, such as use of chat rooms, blogs, bulletin boards, instant messaging, and e-mail. Predators often meet unsuspecting teens in chat rooms prior to communicating with them via other means. If you find that your teen is receiving inappropriate communications from a potential predator, contact your local law enforcement agency for assistance.